

VAIL & VICKERS LETTER BOOK
March 1-November 28, 1906

Abbreviations used are as follows:

- CA (California)
- JVV (John Van Vickers)
- WLV (Walter L. Vail)
- LA (Los Angeles)
- SB (Santa Barbara)
- SF (San Francisco)
- SRI (Santa Rosa Island)

Unlike with the Santa Cruz Island Company letter books, no mention is made of language. All letters are in English.

Vickers, John Van, Walter L. Vail, and Alex Mills. **Letters.**

Los Angeles: March 1-November 28, 1906.

Typescript, 500 sheets of copy paper (of which 126 are used) + index section (used), peach cloth with sheep spine and tips, label with company name on upper cover.

Sheet 1

From JVV, LA to Dan Donovan, LA, March 1, 1906.

Topic: Sale of horses.

Sheet 2

From JVV, LA to Standard Oil Company, LA, March 5, 1906.

Topic: Empty drums.

Sheet 3

From Alex Mills, LA to San Francisco Savings Union, SF, March 5, 1906.

Topic: Acquisition of interests in SRI (interest payments to Eliza M. Miller and Cornelia A. Baldwin).

Sheet 4

From Alex Mills, LA to Santa Barbara Lumber Company, SB, March 5, 1906.

Topic: Request for itemized invoices.

Sheet 5

From WLV, LA to Captain F. Widing, SB, March 14, 1906.

Topic: Potential sale of "Mildred E."

"Will you kindly take Mr. Bacon to the 'Mildred E' and show her to him, and explain to him as near as you can her condition. Mr. Bacon is anxious to purchase the 'Mildred E' and as you know we have no use for her and are very anxious to sell."

Sheet 6

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, SRI, March 14, 1906.

Topics: Rain at SRI, shearing and shearers, potential visit from Mr. Pepper's mother, rain and feed in Arizona.

Sheet 7

From JVV, LA to Sarah Pepper, San Magill [sic], CA, March 14, 1906.

Topics: Potential visit to SRI and her son Frank, schooner "SRI."

"Yours of the 12th at hand. Our boat is not running now and we do not know when it will be running again."

Sheet 8

From WLW, LA to William Barnes, Secretary, Cattle Sanitary Board of New Mexico, Las Vegas, NM, April 7, 1906.

Topic: Dehorning.

Sheet 9

From JVV, LA to Henry Miller, c/o Miller & Lux, SF, April 7, 1906.

Topic: Beef market conditions in SF.

Sheet 10

From WLW, LA to Western Dressed Beef Company, SF, April 14, 1906.

Topic: Cattle sales.

Sheets 11-12

From WLW, LA to J.C. Norton, Territorial Veterinarian, Phoenix, April 16, 1906.

Topics: Health of Vail & Vickers cattle, potential shipment of bulls from SRI to Arizona.

Sheets 13-14

From WLW, LA to John Ingram, San Luis Obispo, CA, April 21, 1906.

Topics: Potential shipments of cattle from SRI to Portland, using lumber schooners.

Sheet 15

From Alex Mills, LA to Jarrett T. Richards, Esq., SB, April 23, 1906.

Topic: Acquisition of interest in SRI (interest payment on Hamersley note).

Sheet 16

From Alex Mills, LA to Alfred Dolge Manufacturing Company, Dolgeville, CA, April 23, 1906.

Topic: Dolge Company invoice payment.

Sheets 17-18

From JVV, LA to C.J. Lehman, General Manager, Crescent Wharf & Warehouse Co., LA, May 17, 1906.

Topics: Coal shipment, Spreckels Company, schooner "SRI."

Sheets 19-20

From WLV, LA to Union Gas Engine Company, LA, May 18, 1906.

Topics: Invoice payment, SF earthquake and fire.

"Please find enclosed our check for \$246.65 in payment of your account to date. This matter was left with me for settlement as I felt there ought to have been considerable reduction made in the bill. I however know that everybody doing business in San Francisco, as well as your concern, are up against it, so I now hasten to pay the bill and hope when they get started again they can make it all right on some future orders."

This letter was copied twice; the duplicate is crossed out in pencil.

Sheet 21

From JVV, LA to J.C. Norton, Territorial Veterinarian, Phoenix, May 18, 1906.

Topics: Health of Vail & Vickers cattle, potential shipment of bulls from SRI to Arizona, request for release of SRI from U.S. Government cattle quarantine area (cover note for copy of letter at sheets 22-23).

Sheets 22-23

From JVV, LA to Dr. Merwin, Chief of the Bureau of Animal Industry, Washington, DC, May 18, 1906.

Topics: Health of Vail & Vickers cattle, potential shipment of bulls from SRI to Arizona, request for release of SRI from U.S. Government cattle quarantine area.

Sheet 24

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, May 21, 1906.

Sheet 25

From WLV, LA to G.O.G. Miller, Esq., Oakland, CA, May 22, 1906.

Topic: Acquisition of interests in SRI (extension of Miller and Baldwin loans).

Sheet 26

From WLV, LA to J.C. Norton, Territorial Veterinarian, Phoenix, May 24, 1906.

Topics: Health of Vail & Vickers cattle, potential shipment of bulls from SRI to Arizona, request for release of SRI from U.S. Government cattle quarantine area.

Sheet 27

From WLV, LA to [William] Mueller, care Banning Company, San Pedro, CA, May 24, 1906.

Topic: Plans for new boat.

"The plans for the new boat have just been received. I have looked them over hurriedly and will take the matter up with my partner, Mr. Vickers, when he seems to be in the humor to build something. Will probably see you in San Pedro within the next few days."

"Vaquero," the successor to the "Santa Rosa Island" was not built until seven years after Vail wrote this note.

Sheets 28-29 ½ (correction for 2 misnumbered sheets)

Invoices to Maier Packing Company, May 28-31, 1906.

Sheet 29 ¾ (correction for misnumbered sheet)

From WLV, LA to Simon Maier, Maier Packing Company, LA, May 28, 1906.
Topic: Cattle sales.

Sheet 30

From JVV, LA to A.M. Barrington, Acting Chief, Bureau of Animal Industry, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, May 31, 1906.
Topics: Health of Vail & Vickers cattle, potential shipment of bulls from SRI to Arizona, request for release of SRI from U.S. Government cattle quarantine area.

Sheet 31

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, June 4, 1906.

Sheet 32

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, SRI, [June 4, 1906].
Topics: Hay and damage to same, abalone fishing, shipment of cattle, saddle blankets, invoices for Pepper's checking and approval.

"Regarding the men who are getting shells you may make the best bargain you can with them and have them pay us all you can for what they get and let them work away below high tide line for the present."

Sheet 33

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, June 4, 1906.

Sheet 34

From Alex Mills, LA to San Francisco Savings Union, SF, June 5, 1906.

Topic: Acquisition of interests in SRI (cover note for interest payments on Miller and Baldwin loans).

Sheet 35

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, June 6, 1906.

Sheets 36-37

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, SRI, June 11, 1906.

Topics: Schooner "SRI," shipment of cattle, Maier Packing Company.

Sheets 38-41

Invoices to Maier Packing Company, June 11-20, 1906.

Sheets 42-43

From WLV, LA to Western Repair & Supply Company, SF, June 21, 1906.

Topics: Outstanding invoice, anchor and chain for schooner "SRI," defective anchor chain provided by Western, SF earthquake and fire.

"I know that you people have all met with losses in San Francisco and on this account I feel as though we should be liberal in the matter."

Sheets 44-45

Invoices to Maier Packing Company, June 22-25, 1906.

Sheet 46

From Vickers Vail Gates, LA to Mrs. T.B. Fuller, LA, June 27, 1906.

Topic: Construction of houses on properties near VVG property at corner of Arlington and Adams, LA.

Sheet 47

Invoice to Montgomery & Mullen Lumber Company, for \$100.00 for one day's use of schooner "SRI," June 29, 1906.

Sheet 48

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, July 2, 1906.

Sheet 49

From JVV, LA to Geo. M. McGuire, SB, July 5, 1906.

Topic: Request for price quotation on lumber.

Sheet 50

From WLV, LA to E.G. Orr, SB, July 5, 1906.

Topic: Declining request to charter schooner "SRI" for passenger use. Transcribed in full.

July 5th, [190]6

E.G. Orr Esq.

SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA.

Dear Sir:

Yours of June 2nd received.

In regard to our schooner SANTA ROSA ISLAND I regret to say that we have no license for her to carry passengers and though it might be possible for us to charter her to others who would use her for carrying passengers which in a way would relieve us of the responsibility, at the same time we are advised that should an accident occur the owners of the boat would be responsible.

We have at sundry times had chances to use her for passenger service but have always refused on this account. We never have carried anyone excepting our invited guests free.

It is barely possible that she will not be here at that time as we have been negotiating for Mexican work for her as soon as we are through using her, but whether she is or not I do not think we would care to take the risk, although we regret not being able to accommodate you in the matter.

Yours truly,

Vail & Vickers [in WLV hand]

WLV-MD

Sheet 51

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, July 5, 1906.

Sheet 52

From Alex Mills, LA to Frank Pepper, SB, July 6, 1906.
Topic: Request for detail as to check signed by Pepper.

Sheet 53

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, July 9, 1906.

Sheet 54

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, [SRI], July 10, 1906.
Topics: Cattle sales, Maier Packing Company.

Sheets 55-56

Invoices to Maier Packing Company, July 11-13, 1906.

Sheet 57

From Alex Mills, LA to Maier Packing Company, July 18, 1906.
Topic: Outstanding invoices.

Sheet 58

From Alex Mills, LA to Frank Pepper, care Captain F. Widing, San Pedro, CA, July 18, 1906.
Topic: Request for detail as to work done by one C. Hernandez on SRI. See also Sheet 52.

Sheet 59

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, July 18, 1906.

Sheet 60

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, care Captain F. Widing, San Pedro, CA, July 18, 1906.
Topics: Floor paint to go to SRI, sheep sales, Captain William G. Waters, Maier Packing Company.

Sheet 61

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, July 21, 1906.

Sheet 62

From JVV, LA to Jarrett T. Richards, Esq., SB, no date.
Topic: Acquisition of interest in SRI (payoff of Hamersley mortgage).

Sheet 63

From JVV, LA to Captain William G. Waters, SB, July 24, 1906.

Topic: Schooner "SRI," transport of sheep.

Sheet 64

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, July 24, 1906.

Sheet 65

From JVV, LA to George M. McGuire, SB, July 25, 1906.

Topic: Request for quotation on lumber.

Sheet 66

From JVV, LA to Jarrett T. Richards, Esq., SB, July 25, 1906.

Topic: Acquisition of interest in SRI (payoff of Hamersley mortgage).

Sheet 67

From WLW, LA to Frank N. Tandy, LA, July 25, 1906.

Topic: Response to Tandy, who had sent pictures of a boat, without further information.

Sheet 68

From JVV, LA to B.E. Parks, Safford, Arizona, July 27, 1906.

Topic: Prospective purchase of cattle (yearling steers).

Sheet 69

From WLW, LA to George M. McGuire, SB, July 28, 1906.

Topic: Lumber.

Sheet 70

From WLW, LA to Fulton & Iverson, Terminal, CA, July 28, 1906.

Topic: Boat building.

"Yours of the 26th in regard to building a pleasure yacht received, and will say that I do not expect to build one this year. In regard to building a larger boat, should we decide to do so we have already made arrangements with a party to build it."

Sheet 71

From Alex Mills, LA to Al Larsen, East San Pedro, CA, July 28, 1906.

Topic: Building of the "Poncho Pepper."

"Herewith find our check No. 1101 on First National Bank of this city your favor for \$200, to apply on your account of \$438.00 for the building of the "Poncho Pepper," for which kindly acknowledge receipt to this office."

Sheet 72

From JVV, LA to Al Larsen, East San Pedro, CA, July 30, 1906.

Topic: Building of the "Poncho Pepper" (specifically, a problem with its gas engine).

Sheet 73

From JVV, LA to Walter L. Cleveland, Manager, Union Gas Engine Company, LA, July 30, 1906.

Topic: Building of the "Poncho Pepper" (specifically, a problem with its gas engine).

Sheet 74

Invoice to Captain William Waters (for 50 buck sheep, freight on sheep, freight on lumber), August 3, 1906.

Sheet 75

From WLV, LA to Al Larsen, East San Pedro, CA, August 3, 1906.

Topics: Vessel "Pepper," Catalina Island.

"Yours received, and in regard to using the PEPPER on Sunday to go to Catalina, I will be glad to have you do so."

Sheet 76

From JVV, LA to Captain Fred Widing, [San Pedro, CA], August 4, 1906.

Topic: Distillate, schooner "SRI."

Sheet 77

From WLV, LA to J.H. Norton, Territorial Veterinarian, Phoenix, August 4, 1906.

Topics: Health of Vail & Vickers cattle, potential shipment of bulls from SRI to Arizona, request for release of SRI from U.S. Government cattle quarantine area.

Earlier letters (Sheets 11, 21 and 26) give Norton's initials as J.C.

Sheet 78

From WLV, LA to Captain William G. Waters, SB, August 6, 1906.

Topics: Acknowledgment of receipt of payment of invoice (Sheet 74), billing for hay purchased in SB on Waters' behalf.

Sheet 79

From Vail & Vickers, LA to Eugene Jourdon, San Pedro, CA, August 20, 1906.

Topics: Payment of bill for sheep inspection, Clemente Wool Company, Captain William Waters.

Sheet 80

From WLV, LA to Frank N. Tandy, LA, August 23, 1906.

Topics: Asphalt (freight on same), deferring plans to have personal boat built.

Sheets 81-82

From WLV, LA to Frank Smith, SB, August 24, 1906.

Topics: L. Whitney (carpenter, copy of letter at Sheets 83-84 enclosed with this one), shipping of cattle to SRI, Stearns Wharf.

"We don't need a fancy carpenter but a good worker to set up tanks and do other ordinary repair work."

"I expect Vail & Vickers will start in shipping to the Island sometime the latter part of next month, and will have quite a herd to move and will it be so that we can use the corrals at the end of the wharf? We, of course, will notify you in advance of our shipments so that if there is anything to do on the wharf in the way of clearing up, you will have plenty of time to do so."

Sheets 83-84

From WLV, LA to L. Whitney, SB, August 24, 1906.

Topics: Erection of tanks on SRI, bathroom in ranch house, schooner "SRI."

Sheet 85

From JVV, LA to WLV, Catalina Island, August 25, 1906.

Topic: Shipment of sheep.

Sheet 86

From Alex Mills, LA to Alec G. Eells, Esq., SF, August 28, 1906.

Topic: Accounting to SRI Company.

"Herewith find copies of the accounts heretofore sent by us to the Santa Rosa Island Company, covering our dealings with which that company is interested, for which you wrote August 17th."

Sheet 87

Invoice to Maier Packing Company, August 31, 1906.

Sheet 88

From Alex Mills, LA to San Francisco Savings Union, SF, September 5, 1906.

Topic: Acquisition of interests in SRI (interest payments on Miller and Baldwin mortgages).

Sheets 89-90

From WLV, LA to John F. Moore (sic), Goleta, CA, September 6, 1906.

Topics: Schooner "SRI," transport of freight and barley for More, consignment of barley to Vail & Vickers for sale.

Sheet 91

From JVV, LA to Frank Smith, SB, September 7, 1906.

Topics: Schooner "SRI," transport of freight and barley for John More.

Sheet 92

From WLV, LA to Frank Pepper, [SB], September 8, 1906.

Topics: Schooner "SRI," boat "Pepper," carpenter, dehorning, water tank and pipeline.

"When the boat comes write a note and let me know whether the new tank filled up with the little spring and how your pipe line is working."

Sheets 93-94

From WLV, LA to Yee Ken, SB, September 8, 1906.

Topic: Abalone. Transcribed in full.

Sept. 8th, [190]6

Yee Ken,
Santa Barbara, California.

Dear Sir:

When I came over with you on the Santa Rosa Island I understood that you would forward to Vail & Vickers the weight of the abalone shells as well as the weight of the meat, but have heard nothing from you.

According to the contract we are to get 25% of the catch and we were to furnish transportation both ways. We furnished the transportation one way and as I understand it you paid \$20 to go over to the Island with your outfit. This being the case we would owe you the \$20.00 and Mr. Pepper sends a bill [Sheet 94] for \$15.85 for meat and flour and coffee which we will charge to you at time of settlement.

Please let us know at once what prospect you have of selling the abalone shells and the meat, and, if you do not think you can handle them reasonably soon we might decide to take our proportion of the shells and the meat and try to market them here for ourselves. If, however, you can get a market for them at a fair price, let us know at once.

Believe me,
Yours truly,
Vail & Vickers (in WLV hand)

Sheet 95

From WLV, LA to Frank Smith, SB, September 8, 1906.
Topic: Abalone. Transcribed in full.

September 8th, [190]6

Mr. Frank Smith
Santa Barbara, California.

Dear Sir:

Will you kindly let us know what the abalones and meat weighed when taken in your warehouse, also let us know whether or not you still have it. We have heard nothing from the Chinamen who promised to advise us of the weight of the abalones taken at the Island. They informed me that they intended to leave them in your warehouse until disposed of.

A prompt reply will oblige.

Yours very truly,
Walter L. Vail

WLV-MD

Sheet 96

From WLV, LA to Captain James G. Prescott, care Schooner Santa Cruz, SB, September 10, 1906.
Topic: Schooner "SRI," WLV purchase of (presumably) Santa Cruz Island wine.

"Your note, enclosing shipping receipt, received and I have instructed the Captain of our boat to get the wine when he calls at Santa Barbara. There was no bill enclosed for this wine so will you please have them send it to me to Los Angeles."

Sheet 97

From WLV, LA to Frank Smith, care Stearns Wharf Company, SB, September 10, 1906.
Topics: Schooner "Santa Cruz," WLV purchase of (presumably) Santa Cruz Island wine, schooner "SRI."

"I have a notification from the Captain of the Schooner Santa Cruz that they have sent to your wharf a barrel of wine for me. Will you please deliver the same to the Schooner Santa Rosa Island when she touches at your wharf."

Sheet 98

From JVV, LA to John F. More, Goleta, CA, September 14, 1906.
Topic: Sale of barley for More (see Sheets 89-90).

Sheet 99

From JVV, LA to Captain F. Widing, Schooner Santa Rosa Island, San Pedro, CA, September 14, 1906.
Topic: Sale and shipment of barley for John More (see Sheets 89-90).

Sheet 100

From JVV, LA to George A. Olney, Safford, Arizona, September 15, 1906.
Topic: Prospective purchase of cattle (steers one, two and three years old).

Sheets 101-102

From WLV, LA to John F. More, Goleta, CA, September 19, 1906.
Topics: Sale of barley for More (see Sheets 89-90), customer need for the barley to be cleaned and price adjusted accordingly.

Sheet 103

From WLV, LA to W.R. Patterson, Deming, New Mexico, October 4, 1906.
Topic: Cattle purchasing.

Sheet 104

From Alex Mills, LA to John More, SB, October 4, 1906.

Topic: Sale of barley for More (see Sheets 89-90), customer need for the barley to be cleaned and price adjusted accordingly. Transmits check to More for \$676.20.

Sheet 105

From JVV, LA to Ira K. Eaton, SB, October 4, 1906.

Topic: Fishing and camping. Transcribed in full.

Oct 4th, [190]6

Ira K. Eaton, Esq.
207 East Anapamu Street,
Santa Barbara, California.

Dear Sir:

Yours of October 1st duly received. We do not wish to give any fishing privileges nor camping privileges on the Santa Rosa Island.

Yours truly,
Vail & Vickers (in JVV hand)

JVV-MD

Sheets 106-107

From WLV, LA to Frank Smith, c/o Stearns Wharf Company, SB, October 5, 1906.

Topic: Planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI.

Sheet 108

From WLV, LA to The Mission Realty Company, SB, October 6, 1906.

Topic: Declines inquiry as to selling SRI.

Sheet 109

From Alex Mills, LA to Anderson & Chanslor, LA, October 6, 1906.

Topic: Cover note for bill payment.

Sheet 110

From JVV, LA to Frank Smith, Stearns Wharf Company, SB, October 8, 1906.
Topic: Planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI. (See Sheets 106-107).

Sheet 111

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, SB, October 8, 1906.
Topic: Planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI. (See Sheets 106-107).

Sheet 112

From JVV, LA to Frank Pepper, SB, October 8, 1906.
Topic: Planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI. (See Sheets 106-107).

“After you get the pens fixed up please arrange that no native cattle will be allowed in them.”

Sheet 113

From WLV, LA to Snow, Church & Company, Chicago, October 26, 1906.
Topic: Billing dispute with Chicago Flexible Shaft Company (shipment of components for sheep shearing machine, that had arrived too late to be of use).

Sheet 114

From WLV, LA to Frank Smith, Stearns Wharf Company, October 27, 1906.
Topic: Planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI. (See Sheets 106-107).

Sheet 115

From WLV, LA to Frank Pepper, SB, October 27, 1906.
Topic: Planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI. (See Sheets 106-107).

Sheet 116

From JVV, LA to E.J. Daniels, Santa Maria, CA, October 30, 1906.
Topic: Lumber (timber land in Monterey County).

Sheets 117-118

From WLV, LA to Frank Pepper, SB, October 31, 1906.
Topics: Calves born on SRI, launch “Pepper” driven ashore in storm, planned shipments of cattle from mainland to SRI. (See Sheets 106-107).

Sheet 119

From Alex Mills, LA to Maier Packing Company, LA, October 31, 1906.

Topics: Acknowledgment of receipt of payment for cattle, outstanding invoice for sheep.

Sheet 120

From Alex Mills, LA to Maier Packing Company, LA, November 2, 1906.

Topic: Outstanding invoice for sheep.

Sheet 121

From Alex Mills, LA to Captain F. Widing, c/o Schooner Santa Rosa Island, San Pedro, CA, November 6, 1906.

Topic: Distillate oil.

Sheet 122

From Alex Mills, LA to Captain F. Widing, c/o Schooner Santa Rosa Island, San Pedro, CA, November 8, 1906.

Topic: Shipment of cattle from New Mexico to Santa Barbara, then to SRI.

Sheet 123

From Alex Mills, LA to E.C. Tallant, County Tax Collector, SB, November 20, 1906.

Topic: Payment of property tax on SRI.

Sheets 124-125

From WLW, LA to JVV, Pierre, South Dakota, November 24, 1906.

Topic: Shipment of cattle to Santa Barbara and SRI.

Sheet 126

From WLW, LA to W.R. Patterson, November 28, 1906.

Topic: Shipment of cattle.